

VIT Video

CONDUCT CASE STUDY: BRENDAN AND ELLA

Brendan is a first year PE teacher and coaches the school netball team. Ella is a year 11 student and team captain.

The school team competes in a state-wide competition. Brendan gives his mobile number to the team for use in emergencies.

Ella, using Brendan's phone number, adds Brendan on Snapchat.

Ella knows Brendan's partner Fiona, who has previously coached her in the local netball team. Ella is a good netball player and a hard-working student, and is well-liked by Brendan and Fiona.

Brendan accepts Ella on Snapchat

One Saturday, Ella's local netball team wins their Grand Final. She sends Brendan a photo of the trophy.

Brendan sends a photo of him walking the dog. He says "Good on you!"

Over the next six months, Ella sends Brendan photos on Snapchat more frequently. Brendan replies less frequently. The contact is innocent.

At the end of the school year, Ella goes to a party and sends Brendan a photo of her cocktail.

Brendan is at the pub with mates.

Brendan replies "hahaha you shouldn't be drinking" with an emoji.

Ella replies "you should totally come by everyone would totally love it"

Brendan replies "I'd love to but I can't"

Ella sends a photo of the dress she is wearing, which is very low cut.

Brendan replies.

Ella replies "if you like that, I can do even better" and sends a photo of herself in lingerie.

The photo is gone in seconds, but Ella tells her friends what happened.

One of her friends tells their Mum.

What happens next?

Brendan has violated their professional relationship without a valid context by holding conversations of a personal nature.

Brendan could be found guilty of misconduct or serious misconduct.

Where did Brendan go wrong?

When Ella added him he should have declined.

What should Brendan do now?

Some suggestions:

- **Cease contact with Ella**
- **Report the matter to his employer**
- **Cooperate with all relevant authorities**
- **Participate in any investigations that might occur**

Remember this is a hypothetical matter, and VIT's advice would vary on a case-by-case basis.